

The Department of Community Planning & Development
City Hall, Lynchburg, VA 24504 **434-455-3900**

To: Planning Commission
From: Planning Division
Date: July 14, 2004
Re: **CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CUP): St. Thomas Moore, 3015 Roundelay Road**

I. PETITIONER

City of Lynchburg, 900 Church Street, Lynchburg, VA 24504

Representative: Tom Martin, AICP, City Planner, Lynchburg Planning Division, 900 Church Street, Lynchburg, VA 24504

II. LOCATION

The subject property is a tract of about 19.58 acres located at 3015 Roundelay Road.

Property Owner: Walter F. Sullivan, The Most Reverend, 811 Cathedral Place, Richmond, VA 23220

III. PURPOSE

The purpose of this petition is to amend the conditions related to traffic calming approved by the City Council on September 10, 2002.

IV. SUMMARY

- Petition does not agree with the Comprehensive Plan which recommends ensuring that traffic conditions do not degrade neighborhood quality.
- Petition does not agree with the Comprehensive Plan which recommends using traffic calming techniques to control cut-through and speeding traffic.
- Seventy-Five percent (75%) of the residents on Roundelay Road were in favor of traffic calming being installed as is consistent with Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Traffic Calming Standards.

The Planning Division recommends denial of amending the conditions of the previously approved CUP.

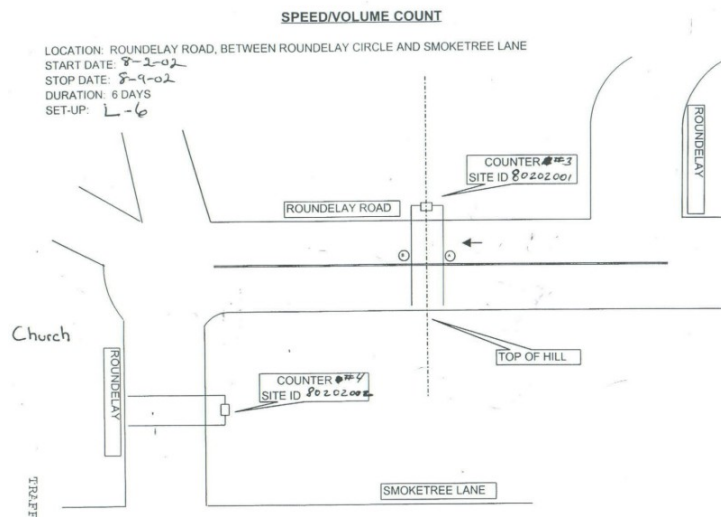
V. FINDINGS OF FACT

1. **Comprehensive Plan.** The Lynchburg *Comprehensive Plan* recommends and Institutional Use for the subject property.
2. **Zoning.** The subject property was annexed into the City in 1976. The existing R-1, Single-Family Residential District Zoning was established in 1978 with the adoption of the current Zoning Ordinance.
3. **Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA).** Not Applicable
4. **Surrounding Area.** The following items have required City Council approval in the immediate area:
 - On November 13, 1979, the City Council approved the CUP petition of St. Thomas More, for the construction of a new church at 3015 Roundelay Road.
 - On February 14, 1989, the City Council adopted the Commercial Corridor Overlay District.
 - On November 13, 1990, the City Council approved the CUP petition of St. Thomas More, for the construction of an educational wing and parking at 3015 Roundelay Road.

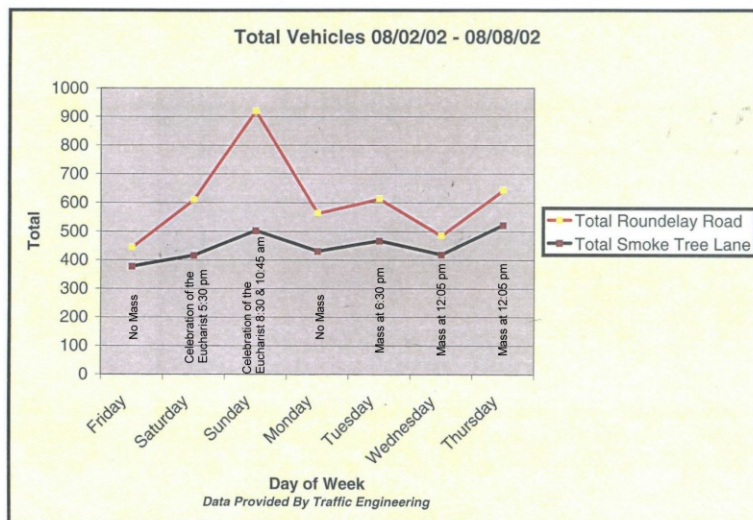
- On April 09, 2002, the City Council approved the rezoning petition of Lynchburg Computer Systems from B-1, Limited Business District to B-3, Community Business District (Conditional) at 7605 Timberlake Road.
 - On September 10, 2002, the City Council approved the CUP petition of St. Thomas More, for the construction of a sanctuary, columbarium and associated parking at 3015 Roundelay Road.
5. **Site Description.** The subject property is bounded to the north and east by vacant land and to the south and west by single-family residential uses.
6. **Proposed Use of Property.** The purpose of the CUP is to amend conditions related to traffic calming approved by the City Council on September 10, 2002. The property will continue to be used as a church with approval to construct two (2) future additions to the recently constructed 12,200 square foot sanctuary.
7. **Traffic and Parking.** The City Traffic Engineers original July 23, 2002 comment of concern related to the expansion of the church was regarding increased traffic in the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Information submitted by the petitioner in September 2002, indicated that the church had 2,200 members which is expected to increase. The following is a listing of services as taken from the St. Thomas Moore web site <http://www.stmva.com>:
- Monday – No Mass
 - Tuesday – Mass at 6:30 pm
 - Wednesday – Mass at 12:05 pm
 - Thursday – Mass at 12:05 pm
 - Friday – No Mass
 - Saturday – Celebration of the Eucharist – 5:30 pm
 - Sunday – Celebration of the Eucharist – 8:30 & 10:45 am

When the church was constructed in the early 1980's, Roundelay Road was the only means of access to the property. Roundelay Road is narrow, measuring nineteen (19) to twenty (20) feet in pavement area and runs through a well-established residential neighborhood. The majority of the homes fronting on Roundelay Road were constructed in the late 1950's to the mid 1960's. There is now a 2nd means of access to the church via Willow Bend Drive (off Old Graves Mill Road) and Smoketree Lane. These streets were constructed in the mid to late 1990's, also run through residential neighborhoods, but were constructed to the current City standard of thirty-one (31) feet of pavement width.

The City Traffic Engineer conducted traffic counts during the period of August 2 to August 8, 2002. Traffic counting devices were placed in two locations on Roundelay Road. Counter number three (3) was placed to capture data on vehicles traveling to and from Timberlake Road, while Counter number four (4) was placed to capture data on vehicles traveling to and from Smoketree Lane.



The traffic data collected clearly indicates an increase of traffic volumes during times of activity of the church. The increase was most notable in the amount of traffic traveling to and from Timberlake Road on Sunday. This increase of traffic volumes is a direct result of Sunday services being held by the church.



The posted speed limit for Roundelay Road is 25 mph. The data collected shows that the median speed for vehicles on Roundelay Road is 25 mph for traffic traveling from Timberlake Road and 28 mph for vehicles traveling towards Timberlake Road. This median speed indicates that while half the vehicles using Roundelay Road are traveling the speed limit, the other half is exceeding it. The data further indicates the speed limit is being exceeded by 5 to 9 mph.

The speed limit for Smoketree Lane is 25 mph, although it is not posted. Data to indicate speed on Smoketree Lane was not collected during the study. However, a resident of Smoketree Lane, Jim Ford has expressed concern to the City Traffic Engineer and Planning Division concerning speeding on this Road.

At the August 21, 2002 Planning Commission meeting, Mr. Joe Slocum, co-chair of the Building Facility Task Force represented St. Thomas More Church. At this meeting Mr. Slocum stated that the church had held two (2) neighborhood meetings. He further stated that *“all comments they received had been favorable with the exception of comments concerning drivers speeding on Roundelay Road”*.

The City Traffic Engineer recommended that “traffic calming” measures be put in place only on Roundelay Road. It was determined that the most appropriate traffic calming measure to use would be raised “speed tables”. Speed tables are long enough for both the front and rear wheels of a car to be on top of the table at once and can be comfortably crossed at 25 mph.



After the appropriate traffic calming measure was identified, Public Works staff surveyed the residents on Roundelay Road and Smoketree Lane. The Roundelay Road neighborhood responded favorably to traffic calming devices with a seventy-five percent (75%) approval rating. The Smoketree Lane neighborhood had a forty-eight percent (48%) approval rating for traffic calming devices. The approval rating received on Roundelay Road is consistent with VDOT Traffic Calming Standards.

Residents opposed to the installation of the speed tables, particularly those residents whose driveways would be in close proximity to the measure appeared before the Physical Development Committee on May 4, 2004 to ask for the requirement for traffic calming devices be eliminated. At its May 25, 2004 work session, the City Council directed staff to return this item to the Planning Commission and the City Council for public hearings. New public hearings are required prior to amending conditions of a CUP.

8. **Storm Water Management.** Not Applicable.
9. **Impact.** Removing the condition related to traffic calming is not consistent with the City's *Comprehensive Plan* which recommends ensuring that traffic conditions do not degrade neighborhoods. The Plan also recommends using traffic calming techniques to control cut-through and speeding traffic. The data collected shows a clear nexus between the volume / speed of traffic and periods of church activity.

The Planning Division believes it is reasonable to require the church to install traffic calming measures that will control the vehicle speeds of its members. Roundelay Road should not function solely as an access road for the church. The residents should be free to use the road for walking or cycling while sharing it with vehicular traffic. As stated by Cynthia L. Hoyle, AICP, in the American Planning Associations, Planning Advisory Service Report *“Traffic Calming”*, “No person or group has the right to increase their mobility at the expense of another person's mobility. This means recognizing that an overemphasis on car transportation discriminates against a large section of society.”

Seventy-Five percent (75%) of Roundelay Road residents favored traffic calming measures being installed. Removing the condition related to traffic calming will not ensure that neighborhoods are not degraded by vehicular traffic, but rather send the message that vehicular traffic is more important. Traffic Calming measures should be required and installed in other neighborhoods of the City where determined appropriate by the City's Traffic Engineer.

10. **Technical Review Committee.** Not Applicable.

11. **Conditions.** According to Section 35.1-15 (f) of the Zoning Ordinance, the Planning Commission or City Council may impose any conditions deemed necessary or appropriate in approving a CUP.

VI. PLANNING DIVISION RECOMMENDATION

Based on the preceding Findings of Fact, the Planning Commission recommends to the City Council denial of amending the condition related to traffic calming of Resolution #R-02-163 as approved on September 10, 2002.

This matter is respectfully offered for your consideration.

William T. Martin, AICP
City Planner

pc: Mr. L. Kimball Payne, III, City Manager
Mr. Walter C. Erwin, City Attorney
Ms. Rachel O. Flynn, Director of Community Planning & Development
Mr. Bruce A. McNabb, Director of Public Works
Mr. R. Douglas Dejarnette, Fire Marshal
Ms. Judith C. Wiegand, AICP, Senior Planner
Mr. J. Lee Newland, Director of Engineering
Mr. Gerry L. Harter, Traffic Engineer
Mr. Robert Drane, Building Commissioner
Mr. Arthur L. Tolley, Zoning Official
Mr. Robert S. Fowler, Zoning Official
Mr. Kent White, Environmental Planner
Rev. James E. Dorson, Pastor

VII. ATTACHMENTS

1. **Vicinity Zoning Pattern**
(see attached map)

2. **Vicinity Proposed Land Use**
(see attached map)

3. **September 10, 2002 City Council Packet**
(see attached City Council Packet)